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Testimony SB 697  
February 2013

Chairman Maynard, Chairman Guerrero and members of the Transportation Committee I am testifying in support of SB 697 AN ACT REQUIRING MOTOR VEHICLE INSURANCE PROVIDERS TO OFFER DISCOUNTS TO CUSTOMERS WHO DOWNLOAD APPLICATIONS THAT PREVENT TEXTING WHILE DRIVING.

I had the unfortunate experience one Sunday passing a fatal pedestrian accident scene in Norwalk. It wasn't until later that evening that I found out that the victim was a friend of mine, Kenneth Dorsey. Kenneth was killed while jogging by a young lady who was driving distracted. That day a young life was not only cut short but the lives of many, were changed forever.

Although we have laws in place, I'm sure you will agree just driving to Hartford every day, we see cars swerving on the road only to pass them and see that the driver is either texting or talking on a cell phone. Distracted driving is one of the biggest causes of road fatalities in the U.S, responsible for as many as 20 percent of all crashes involving injury or death. And with almost 2 trillion texts sent each year, it's not difficult to work out that texting is a major contributor to those disturbing statistics.

While texting is no longer the exclusive pursuit of teens, young drivers are particularly vulnerable to the distractions caused by smartphones and other handheld devices. Over 30 states and the District of Columbia have banned texting and driving, but the laws are notoriously difficult to enforce. And while companies like Ford are introducing Do Not Disturb buttons that can block incoming calls and text messages, these tools are slowly becoming available.

Fortunately for concerned parents, there are a number of applications that have been specifically designed to disable cellphone and smartphone features while younger drivers are behind the wheel. The apps use a phone's GPS capability to determine movement and typically block texting and web surfing when a vehicle is going faster than 5 or 10 mph.

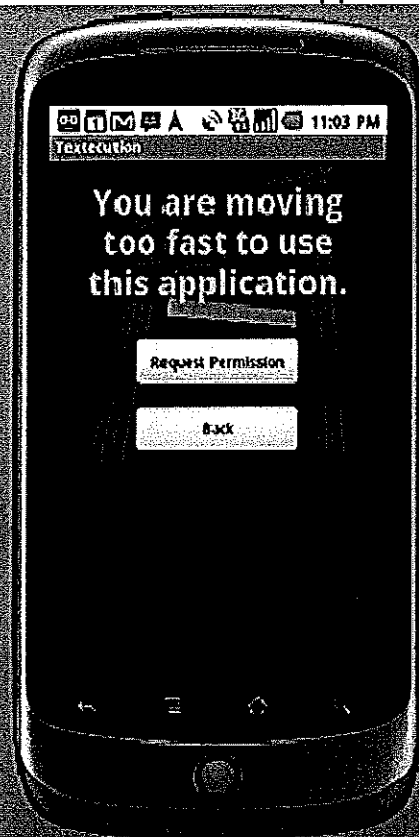
I support this legislation that will offer a discount to parents if they download and have their children use those apps. Offering a financial incentive to installing the available apps in phones brings some hope to this situation. It is my hope that this never happens to another person, but as we know, we can't prevent it completely. This legislation will be a step in the right direction, and if it saves the life of just one person it will be worthwhile.



## Mobile App Makes Texting While Driving Virtually Impossible

[mashable.com/2012/09/07/app-stops-texting-driving/](http://mashable.com/2012/09/07/app-stops-texting-driving/)

Sep 7, 2012 ... Once your **phone's** GPS indicates your car is moving above a speed of your ... This means teen drivers can't **disable** the app without permission ...



### Frequently Asked Questions

#### How Does It Work?

A very excellent question.

Here is a simplified explanation of how the Textecution™ application works. Once installed, Textecution™ sits quietly in the background and allows you to use your phone as you normally would. Once Textecution™ recognizes that the phone is traveling faster than 10mph, Textecution™ disables the phone's texting feature so text messages cannot be sent or received. Once the phone is at rest, or traveling at a speed slower than 10mph, the texting feature seamlessly becomes available for use, and text messages may be sent or received.

#### Why would I put Textecution™ on my own phone?

You wouldn't. Textecution™ is designed for parents to put on their children's phone to prevent them from texting while driving. It is also a great application for employers to put on their employee's phone to reduce vicarious liability involving automobile accidents.

#### Texting is so popular! Why did you create this application?

We created this application because we care about people. Not just you, but others on the road as well. National statistics show a substantial increase in the number of vehicle accidents that are caused by drivers who are texting while operating their vehicle. We created Textecution™ in an effort to decrease the number of accidents that are caused by drivers who drive recklessly distracted because they are reading or typing text messages instead of focusing on the road.

### **Can Textecution™ be installed on any mobile device?**

For now, Textecution™ can only be installed on an Android device, like the Google G1 or the Verizon Droid. However, our development team is currently working on other versions. We will keep you updated.

### **Does the administrator phone have to be an Android powered phone or can the administrator have a Blackberry or other mobile phone?**

Great question. No, the administrator does not need to own a G1 or Android enabled phone. The administrator only requires a phone that has texting capabilities and functionality. Any brand will do.

### **What if I am a passenger, or riding on a bus or train? Will I be able to text?**

We have developed an override function to the application. If you wish to override Textecution™ and text while the phone is in motion, choose "Request Permission", and a text message will be sent to the administrator who installed Textecution™ on your mobile device. If the administrator responds "Allow", the texting function will work for the next four hours even while in a moving vehicle. The administrator (parent or employer) is in complete control, and responding "Allow" takes only a second or two. Of course the Administrator can decide not to disable Textecution™ by not replying or by responding to the text message with something other than "Allow".

### **My parents installed this application on my phone. Can I uninstall it?**

Yes. But your parents will be auto notified by text if you remove the application.

### **Isn't this another version of Big Brother?**

Not at all. Textecution™ only uses GPS to determine the rate of speed that the device is moving and does not report your location to the administrator. Textecution™ does however give parents peace of mind knowing their child is safer on the road, and gives employers comfort knowing they minimized their liability while employees are driving.

### **I do not own an Android mobile phone. Is Textecution™ available for any other mobile device right now?**

Not yet. We developed Textecution™ for the Android platform and it will only be available for phones that have Android platform installed. Android will be available soon for hundreds, if not thousands, of phones in the near future, so stand by.

### **Is there a monthly fee?**

No, the current price is a one time cost per phone.

**Stop Texting While Driving. Buy Textecution Now. Premium Mobile ...**  
**www.textecution.com/**

Textecution™ is a user-friendly application that completely disables texting ... is designed for parents to install on their teenage driver's phone so they know their ...

## New Apps Disable Texting while Driving - MarketingVOX

[www.marketingvox.com/apps-cut-off-texting-while-driving...](http://www.marketingvox.com/apps-cut-off-texting-while-driving...)

Nov 17, 2009 ... New Apps Disable Texting while Driving - Publisher: MarketingVox. ... than 10 miles per hour, and then disables the phone's texting function.

## New App Disables Texting Function While Driving

[nj1015.com/will-a-new-app-stop-teens-from-texting-while...](http://nj1015.com/will-a-new-app-stop-teens-from-texting-while...)

Aug 13, 2012 ... The app, which works for Apple and Android devices, uses the phone's GPS to disable the texting function while the car is moving. Ocean ...

## Apps that block texting and driving - The Online Mom

[www.theonlinemom.com/secondary.asp?id=1963](http://www.theonlinemom.com/secondary.asp?id=1963)

The apps use a phone's GPS capability to determine movement and typically block ... Textecution disables the phone's texting feature, so text messages can't be ...

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Over 30 states and the District of Columbia have banned texting and driving, but the laws are notoriously difficult to enforce. And while companies like Ford are introducing Do Not Disturb buttons that can block incoming calls and text messages, these tools are only slowly becoming available.

Fortunately for concerned parents, there are a number of applications that have been specifically designed to disable cellphone and smartphone features while younger drivers are behind the wheel. The apps use a phone's GPS capability to determine movement and typically block texting and web surfing when a vehicle is going faster than 5 or 10 mph.

Here are four of the more popular apps, although none of them are currently available for the iPhone:

### **tXtBlocker**



tXtBlocker blocks texting and speaking while a vehicle is in motion and sends an automatic "Driving" message to anyone who texts or calls. tXtBlocker can also be customized to block text messages or calls at certain times of the day or near certain locations, such as a school or workplace. 911 calls are

always allowed. tXtBlocker costs \$6.99 for a single-user plan and \$9.99 a month for a family plan. It works with most Android and BlackBerry devices.

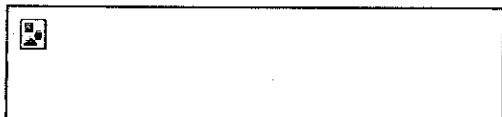
### **Cell Safety**

CellSafety is the mobile initiative from WebSafety, which produces highly-acclaimed PC monitoring software. CellSafety offers a complete suite of cellphone safety apps, including message monitoring, GPS tracking, no texting and driving, no



texting zones, and speed alerts. CellSafety costs \$9.99 per month for a single device and \$14.99 per month for up to three devices. Again, CellSafety supports most BlackBerry and Android devices.

### Textecution

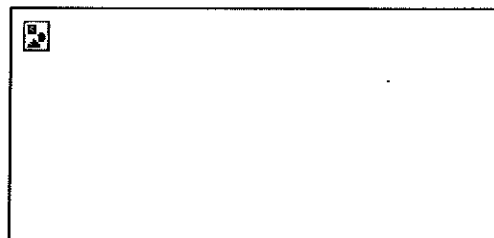


Textecution sits quietly in the background and allows you use your phone normally. Once it detects that the phone is travelling faster than 10 mph, Textecution disables the phone's texting feature, so text messages can't be sent or received.

Once the phone is at rest or travelling slower than 10 mph, the texting feature is restored. There is a one-time fee of \$29.99 to download the app, which is good for the life of a phone number. Android devices only.

### iZUP

iZUP is another app that monitors speed and other critical conditions to determine whether a phone is in a moving vehicle. Once a predetermined speed is reached, iZUP kicks-in and disables incoming and outgoing calls, texting, and e-mail. There are exclusions for 911 calls and other authorized numbers, such as a parent, guardian or employer. iZUP is \$2.95 per month for a single user and \$5.95 per month for a family plan covering up to 5 different phones. iZUP is available for a range of Android and BlackBerry devices.



Eliminate the Temptation – Best Ways to Prevent Your Teen from ...  
[internet-safety.yoursphere.com/2012/04/eliminate-the-te...](http://internet-safety.yoursphere.com/2012/04/eliminate-the-te...)

Apr 25, 2012 ... It **disables** the **phone** from receiving texts, emails, **phone** calls, and ... the **application** is activated, it will limit **texting**, emails and **phone** calls.

App Can Prevent Users From Texting While Driving - Slashdot  
[tech.slashdot.org/story/12/08/25/1523244/app-can-preven...](http://tech.slashdot.org/story/12/08/25/1523244/app-can-preven...)

Aug 25, 2012 ... Then the **app** on the drivers **phone** **disables** **texting** until you are out of the car. Until someone with a **phone** present claims to ...

AT&T working on way for parents to **disable** **texting** and calling for ...  
[news.yahoo.com/blogs/technology-blog/t-working-way-pare...](http://news.yahoo.com/blogs/technology-blog/t-working-way-pare...)

Aug 15, 2012 ... AT&T is working on a smartphone and tablet **app** that will let parents **disable** **texting**, calling, and even internet access on their child's **phone** ...

Cell **phone** **app** created in Jacksonville **disables** **texting** while driving ...

[jacksonville.com/business/2010-07-03/story/cell-phone-a...](http://jacksonville.com/business/2010-07-03/story/cell-phone-a...)

Jul 2, 2010 ... Teens may not like this cell **phone** **app**, but their parents might. And the Jacksonville inventor of the new Textecution **application** says it might ...

Block **Texting** While Driving | GuardChild

[www.guardchild.com/block-texting/](http://www.guardchild.com/block-texting/)

**Apps**, software and hardware to protect teens and adults from texting while driving. ... Information from the DOT indicates cell **phones** – texting or talking – were ... Key to Safe Driving hardware that will **disable** **texting**, emailing and other ...